

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 06254 121512Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 121420Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2637

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6254

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, CB

SUBJECT: PROTECTING POWER

REF STATE 84094

1. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE ANSWER ON QUESTION OF PROTECTING POWER TOMORROW OR FOLLOWING DAY WHEN WE HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO STAFF-OUT THIS QUESTION. PRELIMINARY ANSWER IS THAT THERE IS VERY LITTLE, IF ANY CHOICE. AS OF TODAY, THERE ARE NO REPEAT NO DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN PHNOM PENH. THE FRENCH AND THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE BOTH LEFT BEHIND A COUPLE OF CONSULAR OFFICIALS TO HANDLE THE PROBLEMS OF THEIR CITIZENS RESIDENTS. NEITHER ONE WOULD BE CAPABLE OF LOOKING AFTER OUR INTERESTS EVEN IF THEY WERE SO INCLINED.

2. SOME PRIVATE AMERICAN CITIZENS DID DECLINE TO BE EVACUATED BY US APRIL 12 FROM PHNOM PENH. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE

THEY ARE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) SYDNEY SCHANBERG, NEW YORK TIMES. (AT SCHANBERG'S PERSONAL REQUEST, DCM INCLUDED IN OUR EVACUATION TIMES KHMER STRINGER AND HIS FAMILY. SCHANBERG HIMSELF, HOWEVER, REFUSED TO LEAVE WITH US.)

(B) AL ROCKOFF, FREE LANCE PHOTOGRAPHER.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 06254 121512Z

(C) LEE RUDAKEWITH, ABC.

(D) RICHARD BOYLE, PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE.

(E) MR. BAILY, PILOT.

(F) MR. BRYANT, PILOT.

(G) MR. OST, PILOT.

(H) MR. BOLINGER.

(I) MR. GEORGE CREAMER.

(J) MR. DOUGLAS SAPPER, BELIEVED TO BE SECURITY OFFICER
FOR S.E.A.T.

3. PRIOR TO APRIL 12 WE WERE CARRYING ON OUR ROSTER OF
AMERICAN AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS A MISS SILVAIN JULIENNE,
WHO WE UNDERSTAND WORKS FOR TIME MAGAZINE. WE ARE NOT SURE
OF HER CITIZENSHIP. SHE WAS NOT AMONGST OUR EVACUEES
AND SHE WAS NOT OBSERVED BY ANY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS
CORPS ON APRIL 12. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SHE LEFT PHNOM
PENH PRIOR TO APRIL 12. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE SHE REMAINED
BEHIND.

4. PAO, MR. MCHALE, SPOKE PERSONALLY WITH EACH OF THE
JOURNALISTS WHO DECLINED TO BE EVACUATED AND URGED
THEM TO COME WITH US; THEY ALL REFUSED. THESE PERSONS
WERE MESSRS. SCHANBERG, ROCKOFF, RUDAKWITH, AND BOYLE.

5. MESSRS. BAILY, BRYANT, AND OST DID NOT JOIN IN OUR
EVACUATION ALTHOUGH THEY HAD BEEN URGED TO LEAVE PHNOM
PENH REPEATEDLY, EARLIER AND AGAIN (EXCEPT FOR OST) ON APRIL 12.
THEY HAVE THEIR OWN AIRCRAFT AT THEIR DISPOSAL AND PRESUMABLY
WILL FLY THEMSELVES OUT WHEN THEY FEEL IT IS REQUIRED. WE BELIEVE
THAT MR. SAPPER IS PROBABLY COUNTING ON LEAVING WITH ONE
OF THESE PILOTS AND THEREFORE DELINED TO PARTICPATE IN
OUR EVACUATION. MR. OST COULD NOT BE FOUND BY OUR CONSUL
ON APRIL 12. HE HAD EARLIER BEEN URGED SEVERAL TIMES TO
DEPART PHNOM PENH AND HAD DECLINED TO DO SO.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 06254 121512Z

6. MESSRS. CREAMER AND BOLLINGER TO THE BEST OF OUR

KNOWLEDGE WERE LAST KNOWN TO BE IN KOMPONG SOM. THEY
HAD EARLIER BEEN URGED TO LEAVE PHNOM PENH SINCE THEY HAVE
NO PARTICULAR REASON TO BE IN CAMBODIA, BUT THEY DECLINED
TO DO SO. THEY MAY FIND THE MEANS TO DEPART THE COUNTRY
FROM KOMPONG SOM IF THEY ARE NOW SO INCLINED.

7. THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CORRECTION WHEN OUR CONSULAR OFFICER, MR. MCCARTHY, ARRIVES IN BANGKOK TOMORROW OR THE NEXT DAY. THIS REPORT IS BASED ON NOTES HE MADE AT DCM'S REQUEST WHILE WE WERE ON BOARD THE USS OKINAWA.

8. THE REMAINS OF MR. VERN PICKUP, THE AMERICAN PILOT WHO WAS KILLED IN THE PRIVATE AIRPLANE CRASH AT POCHENTONG TWO DAYS BEFORE OUR EVACUATION, ARE IN THE MORGUE AT CALMETTE HOSPITAL IN PHNOM PENH. WE WERE UNABLE TO SHIP HIS REMAINS OUT TO BANGKOK PRIOR TO OUR DEPARTURE. WE ARE NOT EVEN SURE THAT THE BODY IN QUESTION IS THAT OF VERN PICKUP, SINCE IT WAS IN EXTREMELY BAD CONDITION. WE WILL HAVE TO PURSUE THIS MATTER THROUGH THE PROTECTING POWER IF ONE CAN BE FOUND OR OTHERWISE.

9. WE LEARNED FROM THE PRESS AT ABOUT 0745 HOURS APRIL 12 THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE U.S. PRESS CORPS HAD ORDERED IN A CHARTER AIRCRAFT FROM SAIGON TO TAKE OUT SOME OF THEIR KHMER EMPLOYEES, THEMSELVES AND THEIR EQUIPMENT. DCM STRONGLY ADVISED THEM AGAINST THIS COURSE OF ACTION AND INDICATED THAT WE COULD ARRANGE DEPARTURE OF ALL OF THEIR PEOPLE, AND THAT POCHENTONG COULD BE A VERY DANGEROUS PLACE THE MORNING OF APRIL 12 WHILE OUR EVACUATION WAS IN PROCESS ELSEWHERE IN THE CITY. AT 0930 MR. JACOBSON OF EMBASSY SAIGON TELEPHONED THE DCM TO ASK IF IT WAS O.K. FOR THIS PRESS-CHARTER PLANE TO ARRIVE AT POCHENTON AT 1100 HOURS. DCM EXPLAINED THAT

HE HAD ADVISED THE PRESS AGAINST USING THIS CHARTER AIRCRAFT BUT TO PERMIT THEM TO DO AS THEY PLEASED, SINCE WE COULD NOT ORDER THEM TO ACCEPT OUR ADVICE. WE DO NOT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BANGKO 06254 121512Z

KNOW IF THIS CHARTER AIRCRAFT EVER REACHED PHNOM PENH, WHETHER IT LANDED, OR WHETHER IT TOOK OUT ANY PERSONNEL. WE HAD DEPARTED PHNOM PENH PRIOR TO 1100 HOURS.
MASTERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EVACUATION PLANS, PROTECTIVE SERVICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO06254
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750128-0517
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750456/aaaabzjr.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 84094
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROTECTING POWER
TAGS: PFOR, AEMR, US, CB
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006